

Intergovernmental Relations

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OVERVIEW

- **What are intergovernmental relations (IGR)?**
- **Why are they important?**
- **Patterns of intergovernmental relations**
- **The tasks of intergovernmental relations**
- **Some examples/Models of IGR**
- **IGR Under 1999 constitution**
- **Actors and Areas of IGR**
- **Challenges of IGR and Fiscal Relations**

WHAT ARE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (IGR)?

- **A federal constitution establishes the structure of government; IGR bring the structure to life**
- **The constitution is the structure; IGR are the process – the way in which the necessary business of the federation gets done**
- **Two types:**
 1. **Relations between the central government and the provinces or states (vertical)**
 2. **Relations among the provinces or the states themselves (horizontal)**
- **No real watertight compartments – overlap, entanglement, sharing**

- Toluhi 2011:3 asserts that IGR is strictly about legal, financial, political and administrative interactions between different levels of government
- Akinsanya 2005 : 267 points out that IGR is the interactions between different levels of government and a vital aspect of governance in a country.

Why is IGR important?

- **Powers and responsibilities in modern federations cannot be clearly divided between two orders of government; hence they have to work together – IGR**
- **In some federations, powers and responsibilities are concurrent or shared in various ways – hence IGR**
- **Involves both politicians and officials**

Importance of IGR

1. Fosters greater national integration
2. Enhances emergence of co-operative rather than competitive federal or unitary state
3. Promote peace and harmony
4. Ensure efficient and effective utilization of available human and material resources
5. Minimises inter-jurisdictional conflict
6. Solve problems of rural and urban poverty ignorance etc

- **For this and other reasons, governments must work with and against one another as circumstances change**
- **In all cases, intergovernmental relations are an inevitable, vital and omnipresent feature of functioning federations**
- **They constitute one of the most important instruments of flexibility in a federal political system. Some others are:**

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

THE TASKS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS: I

- **Primary functions:**
 - **Putting the provisions of the Constitution into action**
 - **Resolving conflicts between the federal partners**
 - **Adapting governing and policy arrangements to changing circumstances**

TASKS OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

- **Fiscal/financial issues: sorting out revenue and expenditure arrangements**
- **Negotiating fiscal transfers, typically from the federal to provincial and regional governments**
- **Regulating intergovernmental competition, policy overlap, policy coordination**

The Current State of Nigerian Federalism

- Nigeria is a country of extraordinary diversity and as such, one of extraordinary complexities.

Problems of Nigerian Federalism

Despite what may or may not have been the real reasons or causes, four things are incontrovertible.

- Nigerian federalism was not arrived at through social contract or poll. It was a model agreed to by a handful of political leaders at the pre-independence London constitutional conferences.
- Nigerian federalism is very sick, unbalanced and lopsided especially in terms of the over-centralization of power.
- National integration has remained an illusion at best, even after over fifty years of independence, with few prospects for change. Ethnicity has been elevated by some people to the level of religion and so Nigeria has remained a state rather than a nation

- Ndu (2003) gave two basic reasons for the erosion of true federalism which characterized the Nigerian nation in the first republic before the onslaught of the military in 1966.

- The collapse of the first republic when the military intervened in January 1966. That intervention by the military marked the end of true federalism in Nigeria.

- There was and still has always been the professional practice of unified command with which soldiers are familiar. He sees the centralized federalism in Nigeria today as one of the disruptive heritage of military rule in Nigeria.

Models of IGR

1. Partnership or overlapping Authority: two or three levels of government considered as equals. Local Govts. Have autonomy to carry out their functions

Relationship is interdependent

Authority pattern is bargaining

Models

- Principal/Agent or Inclusive-Authority Model: highlights hierarchy as the basis for relationships.
- Relationship is dependent
- Authority pattern: hierarchy

Models

- Dual or Coordinate Authority Model: tiers of government being assigned with specific responsibilities based on their functional importance. The tiers are expected to carry out those roles
- Relationship is independent while authority pattern is Autonomy

Actors and Areas of IGR

- The President and Governor, President and Local Government Chairmen, Ministers and Commissioners of equivalent or same ministries at state and federal levels, Government Agencies, Senate president speaker of the federal house of Representatives, etc

IGR Fiscal Relations in Nigeria's Fed. System

- The 1999 constitution of the Fed. Republic of Nig. Put in place provisions on which IG fiscal relations are based:
 - 1. Any amount standing to the credit of the federation account shall be distributed among the Fed, state and Local Govts.
 - 2. Any amount standing to the credit of the state in the federation account shall be distributed among the states as prescribed by the National assembly

- 3. The amount standing to the credit of the local Govt. councils shall also be allocated to the states for the local govt. However, the current Buhari administration has last week altered this provision by directly paying the allocation directly to the local govt.

TEST QUESTIONS

1. Enumerate 5 importance of intergovernmental relations
2. Explain the four problems of Nigerian Federalism

Principles of IGR

- **Effectiveness**
- Intergovernmental relationships must be established so that they are capable of achieving policy objectives that have been set (and so that there is the capability of avoiding duplication and overlap).

- **Transparency**

- Effective information about policy objectives and decision making must be in the public domain so that there is clarity around the bases for decisions and actions as well as greater pressure brought to bear on governments to maintain the federal reform agenda and be accountable for progress and outcomes of reform.

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- **3. Accountability**
- Governments must be subject to appropriate checks and balances to ensure their actions and decisions are scrutinized and justified.
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- **. Efficiency**
- Intergovernmental relationships must be capable of achieving objectives in a timely manner free from political capture or stalling, and against a long-term vision

- **. Independence**
- Actions and decisions must be free from undue influence from political or private interests. They must have high-level commitment

- **ASSIGNMENT:** To what extent has all of these principles been followed or practiced in the Nigerian intergovernmental relations experience?

Determinant Factors of Federal-States Intergovernmental Relations

1. The constitutional allocation of powers to each levels of government is a factor that affects Intergovernmental Relations.
2. Administrative and legislative exclusiveness
3. An important factor that determines or affects the character of Intergovernmental Relations within a federation is a character of the political party system. One party or multi party systems.

4. Federal-states Intergovernmental relation contains different channels that require cooperation and coordination of both orders of government in federations. One is executive and administrative interaction involving ministers or officials of each government consulting, coordinating and deciding on common agendas with each other which is the most common channel that dominates intergovernmental cooperation and coordination in federations. The second channel is through legislative channels which involves the legislator in each of the governments to perform legislative responsibilities.

5. Judicial and non-judicial processes to settle intergovernmental disputes and conflicts are the last channels of relations in federations. Thus, there are different dimensions, structural and channels of intergovernmental relations in federation

6. The principle of interrelatedness of the three spheres of government which give duty of each to cooperate with one another in mutual trust and good faith that reflect common loyalty to the republic as a whole.